

# The Parents' Role in Sex Education

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NEVER before the present day has science so deeply affected the life of man. This utilization of knowledge about the physical world has come about through three steps: after first observing some of the fundamental phenomena of nature, science creates theories to account for them, and finally goes on to apply these discoveries to the control of nature. The discovery of the Roentgen ray and the Hertzian wave and their application respectively in the x-ray and in wireless illustrate this progression.

The same method—that of “the observation of phenomena, the orderly arrangement and classification of facts observed and the finding of ‘laws’ which will serve to explain those facts and enable us to predict and control the occurrence of future phenomena of the same order”—is now being applied to the internal life of man. The application of the scientific approach to this inner world of thought and emotion should produce success as amazing as it has met in the external world.

When the scientific method is not employed society tends to give credulous explanations for natural phenomena. Of such are myths made. Until quite recently, this was still true in sex education. Problems were dealt with either by ignoring their existence, by forbidding their mention, or by giving ready explanations such as the stork or doctor myth. Only in the last twenty or thirty years have we come to explore critically the psychological problems of childhood without attempting to weigh their moral or unmoral nature. This unmoral attitude of science holds truth more important than any possible moral implication. Only when facts of sex, as of other matters, are gathered, are we in a position to know what to do.

Irrespective of one's agreement or disagreement with Freudian psychology, practically all authorities

acknowledge Freud's great contribution in injecting the dispassionate atmosphere of scientific inquiry into this sacred domain. Thirty years ago it was held that there was no infantile or childish sexuality before puberty. Those children who did show such behavior were considered abnormal. As a result of Freud's studies, and the work of his pupils, we have come to realize that the sexual life of the child, in the broader sense, antedates puberty, that it, in fact, begins at birth. Embryologists even maintain that the first puberty occurs in the second quarter of the fetal growth. From that time on there are alternating periods of activity and latency throughout childhood. The very existence and use of the stork and other myths are presumptive evidences of the child's sexual curiosity. Freud maintains, on the basis of observations made upon children and adults, that, although the infant and child have a sexual life rich in content, it is one which differs at many points from that of the adult and from that which, from the adult point of view, is called normal. One of the chief differences is that in childhood the barriers which inhibit the sex drive of the adult are still absent. Barriers as to animals, persons of the same sex, blood relations or parts of the body other than the genitals are not yet set up; these are only developed through training by the human environment of the child.

This is the essential aspect of sex education. The infant and little child do not have our attitude toward animals, are free of disgust for excrement, the difference between the sexes is unknown, and they seek satisfaction for the sex drives from persons and objects nearest and dearest to them. In fact he discovers that many parts of the body can and do yield satisfaction which, in the Freudian sense, may be considered sexual. The infant's first sexual experiences accompany such processes of



self-preservation as feeding and excretion. Very soon there are added the experiences and gratifications derived from the genitals. About the third year, sexual curiosity primarily directed to the problem of birth develops.

### Social Pressure—Where and When

EVERY human group, irrespective of the drives that bind it together, is forced, in order to preserve itself, to suppress, inhibit, restrain and direct the sexual as well as other aggressive and anarchic tendencies, and bring them under the control of the individual. The methods by which it seeks to do this are called customs, morals or laws. This suppression is necessary; without this restraint of the sexual drive civilization would be swept away. Just how and when this restraint is to be applied to the child is the crux of sex education. In harsh and rigorous epochs, such as the Puritan, Calvinist and early Jewish, severe measures were used to curb primitive human drives. The case histories of presentday psychiatrists show that such measures are still being used. The other extreme of spoiling, indulging and overstimulating the child is also prevalent. We know that both the repressive and indulgent methods lead to the formation of personalities at war with themselves and with the world.

The psychoanalytic view that neuroses are the result of conflicts between the sex and ego drives has probably had a great influence in changing society's attitude toward sex and the sex education of children. Particularly is this true when one considers that it is the infantile forms of the sex drive that are thought to be at work. Consequently, there have appeared countless books, papers and lectures which, for the greater part, have had as their keynote, "How shall I tell my child?" With the fear of neuroses in their hearts, parents have hungrily sought for knowledge. Jung, Zullinger and many others report instances of children who after they had been "told everything," promptly forgot it, and to their parents' amazement preferred to believe the stork myth. Then again, some children even after having been "told the facts of life" develop maladjustments, neuroses, bad habits and even bad character. If one talks to these enlightened but maladjusted children, it seems that the problem has shifted from "How shall I tell my children?" to "How shall I tell my parents?"

Freud points out that children, early in life, form their own theories as to the differences between the sexes and the origin of children. Possibly their

inherited constitutional structure plays a part in determining their theories. Furthermore, there is in these self-elaborated theories a considerable amount of individual and important research done by children. They start with the facts of their own experience and draw their conclusions using their own childish logic. One of the facts, for instance, not at their command is the concept of a vagina. They can see a penis or the genitals of a girl, but a vagina they cannot grasp. Ergo, they often hold fast to their own theories, such as that a baby is born through the mouth, the rectum or the navel. Boys may go so far as to deny that only women have children.

Children who do not get their sexual education from their parents are almost certain to seek it from their playmates and teachers. Quite a number of schools have question boxes into which pupils may place their questions on any subject, anonymously if they wish. This has been done on the ground that no school plan can be so thoroughly worked out but that it still leaves many questions unanswered. Seelig, principal of a large Berlin school, has recently published such questions. In a class of thirteen- to fourteen-year-old girls, there were forty-six questions of which sixteen were sexual. In another class of thirteen-year-old girls, there were forty-five questions of which twenty-six were sexual. In still another class of twelve-year-old girls, there were twenty-nine questions of which twenty-six were sexual.

### Unbiased Testimony

THE Prussian minister of arts and sciences asked Professor Hoffman of Leipzig and Professor William Stern of Hamburg to investigate and report on delinquency and its disciplinary treatment. As neither of these experts is a psychoanalyst or even friendly to psychoanalysis, their results are interesting as confirming the psychoanalytic viewpoint. Hoffman concludes that the sexual life of children never accords with the ethical norms of adults. At first his sexuality brings no stress or strain into the life of the child because it is largely a play manifestation. Only as he grows older does caution, secrecy and guilt become added to this form of activity. The school rarely learns of the sexual life of children; the pupils are much better informed about such matters. Punishment by the school as a preventive measure is not recommended, yet education is really able to accomplish something in this field. Neither moral instruction nor an explanation of the physiological processes involved in



sex are of much help, but the most essential aid for the child is a mature personality with whom he can discuss his problems. The focus of sexual pedagogy is the contact the child has with an experienced, understanding adult.

Hoffman calls particular attention to two sources of error; first, that punishment should not be used to educate; and, second, that sexual delinquency should not be looked upon as exceptional. Stern feels convinced that one of the causes of sexual difficulty in children is in the defective and deficient sexual education of their parents and teachers. Both Hoffman and Stern agree "that to assume that children have no sexual life but that it is suddenly acquired in the years between twelve and fourteen would be, apart from any observations at all, biologically just as improbable, indeed nonsensical, as to suppose that they are born without genital organs."

### Parental Patterns

WHEN parents see that the child has a sex life, then they tend toward a sense of responsibility for his education. They will seek at first to learn the facts and convey them to their children. But more than the spoken word is necessary, for sex information in itself is insufficient for the enlightenment of the child. In view of the child's tendency and ability to identify itself with its environment, the important aspect of sex education is the behavior of the adults upon whom it is dependent. Just as children use their parents as models in all other spheres, so also are they models in their sex life, though perhaps in a more subtle but no less significant way. It is, therefore, most important that parents should understand the growth and development of the sex drives in human beings. More important still, in fact essential, is the emotional re-education of parents themselves. It is the parents' knowledge and attitude toward sex that is the greatest single factor in molding and directing the sex drive of the child. Parents must give up their secretive ways because they are both harmful and impossible and because the newer era in human relations, and especially in pedagogy, is guided by the dictum "open covenants, openly arrived at."

Parents see themselves faced with the alternative—shall we allow our children to express themselves sexually, or shall we place ourselves in the ranks of the repressors? The old methods of bringing up children were frankly repressive. But the alternative is not necessarily unbridled liberty.

Rather, the modern attitude attempts the golden mean. It allows the wishes of the child some expression and satisfaction, but at the same time it forces the child to experience deprivation. These deprivations are necessary if we are to maintain society in its present form and if the child is to become a member of society in good standing. Consequently, neither sexual affirmation nor denial, but a compromise should be our policy.

Parents should remember that there are unconscious tendencies not only in the child but in themselves. They must consider the possible danger of their own unconscious urges being directed toward the child, and given rationally well grounded, pedagogic reasons looking toward the child's well being. The danger of expressing under the mask of pedagogic necessity these unconscious, instinctual urges of the parent toward the child is so much the greater because it is these very tendencies that cannot be expressed toward the society of adults. But the helpless child who is dependent upon the adult and cannot defend himself is the only object upon which adults can vent their own repressions without fear of reprisal. For instance, the punishment and correction of children are often consciously sought and justified, whereas in reality they are the expression of the parents' own sadistic tendencies. This is true in relation not only to punishment but also to many seemingly harmless actions, like the teasing of children by adults.

### Guidance not Repression

DEVELOPMENT and integration of the child's sex drives are the main objects to be achieved in sex education. At every step of his biological growth, and as impressions come from the world, parents should seek neither to stimulate nor to inhibit, but rather to guide. The goal should be a sex drive adjusted to the individual and his world. Failures in this endeavor are often due to the parents' deficient knowledge of the human mind and its development, and especially to their poor insight into the child's mind. Parents often act as if they themselves were beyond the problems and dangers of life. The illusion they create thereby in the child's mind disturbs his development.

Freud has recently clearly stated the central point of the attitude that should obtain in the newer education in his book on *Civilization and Its Discontents*.<sup>\*</sup> He suggests that not only in sex, but also in other aspects of life—such as their own aggressiveness and that practiced against them by others—we

<sup>\*</sup> Cf. Dr. Glueck's discussion of this book on page 263.



hold up to youth impossibly perfect patterns. But we fail to explain that these are what man should be rather than what he is. By making them believe that these ideals represent reality, we demand too much of them and make their own shortcomings loom too large.

It cannot be stated too often that the child is guided in his efforts to control his drives in accordance with the behavior of the people he loves and respects. Only those parents can really educate

their children who can themselves do that which they require of their children. It is fairly well agreed that the first five years of life are the determining years in the formation of character; furthermore, in these years, every child goes through phases of his sexuality, the successful accomplishment of which is dependent upon his surroundings. The parents' role in the sex education of their child is primarily that they shall have achieved their own.

## Meeting the Little Child's Needs

*A possible change of emphasis in early sex education.*

CÉCILE PILPEL

IT is no new thing to swing to extremes before we find the happy medium, for the evolution of most human behavior seems to follow the arc of the pendulum. This has been strikingly evident in the development of sex education. From the heavily weighted traditional silence toward children's questions the tendency has been to swing to the most unregarding frankness, though it is likely that this second reaction is almost as far from meeting the child's real needs as the first. Now we are beginning to realize that the only alternative to the old "tell nothing" attitude is not necessarily literally to "tell all."

During the thirty years or thereabouts in which this awareness of the child's need for sex education has been growing, the springs of interest and the goals to be attained have thus varied and shifted. These changes are reflected in the literature on the subject which has appeared in response to the new interest. It is particularly significant, therefore, that the most prolific and popular section of this literature has seemed to see the sex education of the little child only as a business of answering the question of "Where does the baby come from?" There are many very attractively illustrated books of this kind which present a wealth of physiological and biological detail in answer to this question. Interested parents eager for knowledge have naturally made extensive use of this material. But the results, to their surprise and regret, have not always been as satisfactory as they had expected. Question begets question; and

the final answer is not always forthcoming. In his attempt to understand the physiological and biological processes to which books introduced him, the child was often compelled to ask why, more and more frequently. Parents made heroic attempts to follow where he led. In one instance, a child by the time he had reached the age of six, had already arrived at the matter of contraceptives, the use of which the father demonstrated with charts. In another case, a child announced to his mother that he would bring out his fishing tackle the next time he met a lady who expected a baby. When asked what this was for he explained that he wanted to hook out the baby while it was still a fish.

Facts, no matter how accurate themselves, are evidently not all there is to sex education. We realize this in other departments of education. Nowhere else have we attempted to interest the child at so early an age in material to which he brings so little in the way of experience, and in which the material lends itself so poorly to the child's mental grasp. Because, perhaps, we have been misled by the language in which the child clothed his questions, we have jumped to the conclusion that his need could be met in terms of physiology. There are, no doubt, five-year-old prodigies in mental development, but these are so rare that when they appear we can attempt to meet them individually on their own special level. But the common or garden variety of child at five seems to fail to relate these physiological facts in any clear way to his previous experience and thinking



or to the inner meaning of his own questions which called forth these undigested facts.

One of the reasons why we have accepted these questions rather superficially at their face value is that we have failed to realize the undertone feelings of guilt due to parental attitude and training which many a child may bring with his questions. There is such a marked discrepancy between his real feeling and experience and the purely physiological and biological knowledge which we impose that the effect produced usually adds to the child's confusion. This has happened because it is so easy for parents to think they know what is good for a child. Just as they used to be sure what he should *not* know, so also they came to have very definite ideas of what the child should know; these naturally blinded them to the meaning of the child's sexual interests.

### Changing Parents

ADULTS have always had ample opportunity to see what the child's true sexual interests were. Slowly but steadily many of the more intelligent and objective parents have come to express dissatisfaction with the procedure they have followed, as its results have proved unsatisfactory. They have realized more and more clearly that this introduction at so early an age into the fields of biology and physiology does not really meet the child's needs. Many parents have been further disturbed by the fact that in spite of the knowledge given them, their children have still showed anatomical curiosity, and have even indulged in sex play. They have begun to observe more closely and have become more interested in finding out what these children are sexually, in the hope that they may discover sound educative procedure.

In this way a great change has been wrought in the questions parents themselves now ask. They are likely to want help as to problems such as these: the child's interests in excreta; the child's withholding of bowel content; reversions back to soiling; curiosity as to anatomical differences; concern about either the possession or lack of the penis; pleasure in nudity. Other typical problems might be, for instance: When is it "safe" to separate brother and sister in regard to sleeping arrangements, the toilet, and so on? Is it wise to discuss with the growing child masturbatory habits which he does not himself seem to practice? How shall parents wisely meet sex play? Parents want to better their understanding of these manifestations, for they realize that the child's attitude in regard to reproduction will in itself be highly colored by the way the par-

ents have met his expressions, interests and behavior manifestations from the very first. Many of the child's insistent questionings, much of his desire to be shown exactly where he came from, may be traced to faulty management of earlier interests.

This new type of question on the part of the parent points to a changing emphasis in sex education. Parents need help in seeing that the sex interests of the little child are his normal interests; that it is important for them to permit an open expression by the little child of his interests. Their growing understanding will lead them in matters of elimination, for instance, to be concerned more with the sound training of the child through an understanding of what these processes may mean to him than merely with the establishment of "good habits." They will not too lightly take the little boy's concern about his penis, they will respect his need for assurance that he will remain structurally as he is. They will realize that he needs this assurance, for he sees that others lack this organ and may wonder why. The same principle, of course, holds true of the little girl. She, too, shows concern about this anatomical difference and, unless reassured, is likely to spend too much thought and feeling on this matter. Much more attention must also be given to understanding the child's interest and pleasure in manipulating his genital organs.

### Achieving an Objective View

PARENTS are so full of fears about the acquisition of the habit of masturbation that they unwittingly surround this practice on the part of the little child with their own marked emotional tension. The crude punishments or threats of adults are the most frequent cause of anxiety about the genital organ, as just suggested. Even where these threats are ruled out, it remains for the parent to consider whether more educational practices such as re-directing interest, and substituting toys, are advisable, or whether the child may safely be left to work through this particular phase into the next by himself. It is more than possible that what parents most need is better orientation in child development rather than directions as to the specific attention to be given to early masturbatory inclinations.

To "nude or not to nude" is another question which shows how easy it is to confuse the real purposes of sex education. Here, too, parents have committed themselves to certain practices with too little knowledge of the child's needs and interests. These "modern" practices have frequently led them into errors of which the consequences may often be as harmful as those which came to the child of another



generation because of his elder's inhibitions in regard to nudity. What we must concern ourselves with is what the toddler really needs and not whether we should appear dressed or nude. We ought to learn to draw the line for ourselves between secrecy and privacy, but the toddler has no need for privacy as yet and he is frankly curious. He does not understand shut doors, whether they relate to nude bodies or refrigerators or pots and pans. Until he can more fully orient himself in the world in which he lives, doors must be easy to open if we wish not to arouse undue curiosity. A need for privacy will develop as the child grows older, and when it does it will be as legitimate as was his previous curiosity. Since, as a people, we do wear clothes, why make difficulty for the growing child in his social adjustments by flaunting before him our disregard of this social convention?

## Sex in Adolescence

FLOYD DELL

THE fundamental attitudes of individuals toward sex are already determined, long before adolescence, back in childhood. At puberty it is about nine years too late to "begin" to teach boys and girls about sex. They have learned about it, in helpful or hurtful ways, long before. The chief determining factor in the creation of their attitudes has not been so much the true or false information they have received on the subject of sex, as the actual attitude of their parents expressed in their domestic relations with each other. Sex is first and last a relation of people of opposite sex to each other, and the home is the school in which the child learns by example what that relation is—whether sex is a relation of manly and womanly attraction, responsibility, generosity, devotion and tenderness, or whether it is a relation of spitefulness, quarrels, complaints, cruelties and neglectfulness on one side or both.

It is important that the little boy should have in his father a fairly good model of manliness to model himself upon, and in his mother a fairly good model of womanliness to serve as a pattern of expectancy in his love life—and so, turning it around, for the little girl. Considering our human weaknesses, it

Yet these are only a few of the questions which must be faced in understanding the little child's need for sex education. And such a brief discussion can in no way adequately meet even these. What I wish is, however briefly, to call attention to the need of a revision of our thinking in regard to the sex education of the little child. The purely biologic and physiologic approach has not been satisfactory in bettering it. We shall have to draw on many sources for contributions; on the psychoanalyst for his findings of the child's sex manifestations; on the psychologist for a clearer understanding of the levels of learning. Parents will have to work out for themselves their own place in line with these contributions. Last but not least, we shall, as parents, have to gain insight into our own personality patterns so that we may not be driven to extremes in what we wish to teach or to prove.

is clear that most of us are not as parents very good models, and some of us are frightfully bad ones. But it is the child's task in early life to love us as best he can; and he takes a lot of trouble to do it. He finds excuses for our weaknesses, he manages somehow to forgive us our faults; he loves us anyhow, if it is possible—not without a good deal of repressed resentment and disappointment which he is going to take out on his own sweetheart later on. Or if we are too hard to love, if it just can't be done, he finds excuses and justifications for not loving us, and tries to find—in the family, among older brothers and sisters, or in the neighborhood, or in school among the teachers, or in storybooks and fantasy—some parent substitutes to take our place, and afford both a model to grow up by and an outlet for the love that is a necessity of his being. At puberty this secret childhood drama has been worked out in some fashion in the depths of the mind. The adolescent boy and girl have their love patterns formed—generous patterns or suspicious patterns, cooperative or selfish or martyr patterns, kindly or cruel or cowardly patterns—affording more or less opportunity for experiencing the realities of love. Some of these patterns will



be so deeply ingrained that, if they are unfortunate ones, they will warp the whole of their adult lives; or if fortunate ones, will carry them triumphantly through accidents and outward defeats which might be utterly discouraging to others. Or these patterns may be overlaid with different conscious attitudes and never reveal themselves except as an unexpected strength or weakness of character in emergencies of their love affairs and marital lives. Or, though the patterns be unfortunate enough, they may be gradually unlearned in the school of life.

Adolescence, among its other important functions, is a time in which unfortunate childhood love patterns that are not too deeply ingrained can be to some extent unlearned. For in the glandular changes of puberty, the race, as it were, comes to the aid of the individual and strengthens with its deep and strong species-instincts of sex all that is manly in the boy and womanly in the girl. The drives of sex come to carry the individual out of his suspicions and fears and selfishnesses; the natural idealism of sex, its generous overvaluing of the other sex, opens up to the individual mind all the possibilities of tenderness, devotion and heroism in love. If the childhood patterns are good ones, the boy and girl are carried along through school and work and play securely toward the responsibilities of manhood and womanhood; if the child patterns are bad, the tune is changed—and if these bad childhood patterns are not too deep, the tune may be changed more or less permanently in the years of adolescence. It is the individual's chance to learn to love well—and for most people their last chance.

At puberty, whether the parents have been good or bad, the boy and girl still emotionally center in them; they have only begun the process of transferring their deeper affections experimentally to others—at first older people and gradually those of their own age class. This process will end normally in a sufficient detachment of the affections from the parents to permit of complete adult love in marriage. This normal development is seriously hampered by too much parental coddling, too much parental severity or too much parental neglect. But in any case it takes time. The transference of affection from friendships with those of the same sex to friendships and romantic relationships with the other sex takes time, too. And the gradual convergence of the sensual and tender aspects of love also takes time.

At first, among adolescent boys and girls, there is a tendency to love romantically at a distance, and

at the same time to enjoy the sexual excitement of permitted and conventional miscellaneous physical contact, in play and dancing for example, without any feelings of tenderness or any really personal interest. It takes time before they dare talk to the one they feel romantic about, before they dare let themselves feel romantic about the one with whom they enjoy physical propinquity or contact. There is a great barrier of sexual shyness to be overcome before they reach the stage of "going with" someone of the opposite sex. That stage marks the necessary union of the sensual and tender aspects of love. If they don't achieve that, they will never grow up emotionally, and they will be doomed to much misery as well as bound to bring misery to others. And after that stage is reached, they still have to learn, probably, in the heartbreaks of young love, what they are like and what they want, before they are capable of making an adult love choice to be ratified in marriage. Thus there is a vast deal of emotional development to be gone through by young people in the years between the onset of puberty and the time when they are recognized as having come of age.

### The Friendly Teens

IN all this period it is important for them to have actual opportunities to meet and work with and play with other young people of the opposite sex. (It is important, of course, also, that they have the same opportunities for friendship with those of their own sex, but these may usually be taken for granted.) No argument on whatever grounds for the separation of the sexes in adolescence is valid when tested by the life-needs of these growing individuals. We may ignore here the perverse parents who try to keep their sons and daughters away from the opposite sex altogether, and touch upon one practical aspect of the problem which the most well meaning and intelligent of parents face. That is the partial breakdown of the home as a social center, and the as yet very incomplete social control gained over the public amusement places which are the substitute for home. To understand a problem is to help solve it. So we may be explicit about its terms. Boys and girls need places to meet and play. These play places cost money to maintain. Boys and girls have never before in the world's history been expected to subsidize their own play places. These in the past have been provided by their parents. That is, the parental homes have been the play places of young people. But this arrangement has been pos-



sible only in a settled life, where people grew up in the same neighborhood. It was not in fact the individual parents but the neighborhood group of parents who provided play places for their growing children. The home, which used to be large, because it was a workshop and domestic factory, has grown smaller; houses and yards have less room for the social play of growing children. Families are not as settled as they formerly were; they move from one neighborhood to another, from one town to another, and they rise or fall in the social-economic scale. So that a "neighborhood" now tends to be composed of strangers, most of whom are recent arrivals and many of whom will move on in a year or two. Thus the neighborhood as a social institution has partly ceased to exist, or has lost much of its social power to provide play places.

### Who Pays the Piper?

THE children become at an early age, through necessity, the arbiters of their social lives. They make their own friends, at school or on the street, owing little to their parents for these opportunities. Sometimes the friendships of the children draw the scattered sets of parents together into acquaintance and perhaps social life; indeed, much of parental social life is a gift by children to their parents. If such interparental social opportunities are neglected or declined, the children go on with their own social life outside of parental observation and control. What their parents have lost the power to provide, they will find for themselves as best they can. He who pays the piper calls the tune.

In the past the pennies and nickels and dimes of children have not been enough to pay for their play places. Now with the increasing concentration of the population in towns, and the cheap mass production of amusement, these pennies and nickels and dimes will provide play places, such as moving-picture theaters, which the parents themselves cannot provide. A little higher in the age scale, we see the pocket money of the young people providing them dance places and orchestras with which the cramped home quarters and the victrola or radio cannot compete. Young people are now to an unprecedented extent independent in their play of the home provision which can be made for them by their parents—a home provision which is unprecedentedly meager and unsatisfactory to their growing needs.

These public amusement places have been, in general, run simply to make money. The enter-

tainment which they provide has not been calculated to the needs of young people, but rather to minister to the unscrupulous greed of those who are profiting from them. This situation has led to a censorship of the movies, and to an attempt at a censorship of dance halls. The movie censorship, though stupid and silly in its workings, is an inevitable reaction to the greed of theater owners and picture producers who would stop at nothing in their competitive efforts to lure the children's pennies into their own pockets; and stupid and silly as it is, the movie censorship is at least a step in the direction of the achievement of social control over the play places of children. The public dance halls have similarly had to be subjected to police censorship in order to keep them from being made, with the assistance of alcohol, recruiting places for prostitution. This also is a step in the direction of social control, though some of the details of the censorship over the modes of dancing are so stupid as to drive impatient young people from these regulated dancing places to unregulated road houses. The automobile, finally, is a social institution which is regularly exploited by perverse, sadistic and dangerous individuals, and is almost wholly beyond any social control whatever.

There are several conclusions to be drawn from this recital of the facts. One conclusion is that a population as much on the move as ours is in a socially morbid state. Probably it cannot last forever; our population will sometime settle down, and a stable social life will once again exist, in which neighborhoods will have more to offer young people in the way of social opportunities, and hence more opportunities for parental supervision and control of their social life. In the meantime, though for vast masses of the population this is quite out of the question, there are parents who are neglecting their actual opportunities.

### Play—A Parental Responsibility

It can be pointed out that though individual parents can provide little or nothing in the way of social opportunities for growing children, a group of parents can do much. It can be pointed out that it is their business as parents to live (if they can—and we are dealing here with those who can) in a neighborhood where there are plenty of other young people for their boys and girls to play with. Sometimes it is intellectual parents and such as pride themselves on their modern ideas who are the most neglectful of their responsibilities. It does not help children for their



parents to spend their time studying modern theories of child psychology if all the use they make of that knowledge is to enable themselves to feel superior to other people. The other people may be doing more for their children. The test of knowledge is action. And here the required action is to provide children with plenty of playmates of their own age. If the parents happen to be most intellectually congenial with a group of childless people, they can easily drift into a selfish habit of giving their children a childless world to live in; for, overstimulated intellectually by the conversation of their parents' circle, they will have a barrier of intellectual snobbishness between them and the children of less intellectual parents, so that they cannot easily make friends. Enterprising children may break that barrier, but ordinarily children get along most easily with the children of their parents' friends. It, therefore, behooves parents to be friends with other parents. Good parents will do this without any theoretical urging; and a whole library full of books on modern psychology will not absolve the parent of a lonely child from the charge of selfish neglect.

### False Philosophies

THERE is, incidentally, a tendency in some supposedly intellectual parents to make of modern psychology an excuse for their selfishness and neglect. The books are hard to understand—for they pick out the hardest ones (or the silliest ones)—and the whole subject is so complicated! They say: "We may be doing terrible things to our children—it's all very mysterious and frightening, isn't it? Who knows what to do, nowadays? We try hard to keep up with modern ideas." And meanwhile they are neglecting their perfectly obvious responsibilities. They are clouding their minds with a haze of technical phrases in order to feel helpless and keep on avoiding their responsibilities. So that it perhaps needs to be said that while the reasons for certain parental behavior may be hard to understand, because in some respects they run counter to traditional maxims, the required parental behavior itself is comparatively simple. It is hard only in that it requires a great deal of love and generosity and restraint on the part of parents from indulging themselves in infantile behavior. It is hard only in that it calls for grown-up behavior, and we are none of us any too grown-up! But it is not at all mysterious.

Finally, there is another conclusion to be drawn from the facts recited above, with respect to the loss of parental control of adolescent social life. It has

been suggested that this is in part a temporary thing, but it will probably outlast our own lifetimes. It has also been suggested that some parents are in a position partially to regain such social control; but this is not possible to many parents, and is in some important respects impossible to any. It has been suggested that society is attempting to achieve a greater control of the public means of adolescent play, not always by the wisest devices. Perhaps we should go on to conclude that in a civilization as recklessly and unscrupulously commercial as ours is at present, we should recognize the inevitability of censorship where adolescents are concerned, and take steps to have such powers exercised by psychically healthy and socially enlightened people, instead of leaving this power in the hands of the neurotics and fools who have usually rushed to grab it.

### Prophecy of Youth

BUT the final conclusion to be drawn is that all outward control, by society or by parents, is on the whole doomed to be too slight to constitute any efficient protection for young people; and that the only protection upon which parents or society can rely is such as is afforded by the psychic health of the young people themselves. This kind of protection has never been better stated than by Walt Whitman in his prophecy for American girlhood:

*"Her shape arises,  
She, less guarded than ever, yet more guarded than ever;  
The gross and soil'd she moves among do not make her  
gross and soil'd;  
She knows the thoughts as she passes—nothing is con-  
ceal'd from her;  
She is none the less considerate and friendly therefor;  
She is the best below'd—it is without exception—she has  
no reason to fear, and she does not fear;  
Oaths, quarrels, hiccup'd songs, smutty expressions, are  
idle to her as she passes;  
She is silent—she is possess'd of herself—they do not  
offend her;  
She receives them as the laws of nature receive them—  
she is strong,  
She too is a law of nature—there is no law stronger  
than she is."*

Perhaps the distinction should be made clear between this modern ideal and the old, unfortunate and psychically disastrous ideal of "purity." The so-called "purity" ideal was founded upon a denial and repression of normal sexual instincts, and it led in fact to homosexuality, perversion, frigidity, impotence and neurotic celibacy or incapacity for wholesome married happiness and healthy parenthood. The modern ideal is founded upon a recognition and acceptance of normal sexuality, and it goes steadily and serenely toward happy marriage and family life. No doubt we shall have "the gross and soil'd," the



men and women halted in infantile sexual attitudes, with us for a long time; but the healthy adolescent boy and girl can move among them, serene and indifferent and unharmed, toward their own goals. It is very true that in this respect nothing outside of us can hurt us. It is only to the extent that our childhood has been mismanaged by repression, sexual ignorance and a bad parental pattern that we have internal weak spots subject to these bad outside influences. That throws the burden of protection back into childhood. It may afford us cause for alarm if there is reason to believe that the childhood period has been seriously mismanaged; but it is also a cause for reassurance if there is reason to believe that the childhood period has laid the foundations of psychosexual health! To an adolescent with such a background no real harm can happen.

### Courage for Maturity

THE problems of adolescence are of their own kind, and they can be helped in their solution by a modern attitude toward sex, as they can be hindered by a patriarchal, repressive attitude. Adolescence is the individual's second chance, with the aid of the sexual instincts, to grow up into a psychically healthy man or woman. It requires time, it requires social contacts with the other sex, it requires a gradual achievement of responsibility, it requires in later adolescence a clear sight of the goal of marriage, and it requires, above all, freedom from fear. It requires especially parental freedom from the fear that accidents may happen in the process. It requires a parental wisdom which will enable them to face the possibility of accidents without panic, and the realization that if accidents do happen they are not necessarily disasters, and will only be disasters because they, the parents, make them such.

By "accidents" is meant overt sexual affairs, with all their possible consequence in pregnancy, venereal disease or illegitimate parenthood. Such accidents do happen. They are certainly not to be taken for granted, and they do not tend to occur except on a basis of mismanagement of the childhood period; so that when they do occur, the parents and society must learn to accept their own responsibility for these incidents. But they must learn also that these are not fatal disasters, or need not be; that young people can emerge from such difficulties into wholesome manhood and womanhood.

Incidentally, we may pause here to note the best parental and social attitude toward adolescent boys and girls who have become involved in sexual misadventures. It should *not* be an attitude which will

increase their sense of sin in regard to their behavior. This is hard for some parents and administrative authorities to realize, but they can easily find out in practice that the happiest results in the further lives of such adolescents are brought about by treating them with the utmost intellectual and emotional tolerance and sympathy. Given the benefit of such tolerance, these adolescents will discover for themselves that they are emotionally unprepared for the overt sexual relations into which they have rushed, and that they are not actually getting any deep satisfactions out of them. (This, though most grown-up people do not know it, is almost universally the fact about such high school misadventures, and it is a very significant fact.) When permitted to make that discovery, and not driven into further defiance by further attempts at coercion, these girls and boys will be ready to go back and start in at the beginning of sex, in normal social contacts and play and companionship, which is what they need in order to grow up emotionally to the plane of adult love and sexual relationships. They should not be made to feel that they have forfeited their parents' love or the respect of society by their behavior. There is, indeed, no reason why they should lose either.

Moreover, sensational as some of these adolescent misadventures may be, they are in reality by no means the worst things that can happen to growing boys and girls. The anxious parental and social attempts to insure against such accidents, by repression and segregation, can produce homosexuality, perversions of all sorts, and sexual and emotional incapacities which can in the long run produce more individual unhappiness and more social ills than a boy's gonorrhea or a girl's illegitimate baby. This is true, but it does not mean that venereal disease and illegitimate babies, or the sex affairs which occasion them, are to be regarded as normal incidents of the social contacts of adolescent boys and girls. On the contrary, the less sexual repression there is, the less occasion is there for these neurotic rebellions. It is the girls and boys who are given least opportunity to develop a healthy sexuality who most readily get into these difficulties.

The girls and boys who are developing in an unhampered way along the path to sexual adulthood have a sense of responsibility which makes them avoid meaningless sex affairs. The gradual growth of their own emotional natures through friendship with the other sex, the permitted and conventional physical contacts in play, as in dancing and petting, the emergence of romantic attitudes toward individuals of the other sex, the slow detachment of the emo-



tions from the parental home and their attachment to those of the opposite sex in their own age class, the preparatory romances and heartbreaks of young love, and the learning of the courtship pattern—all preliminary and necessary to adult love choice and mating—constitute for these boys and girls a sufficiently exciting and important drama extending throughout adolescence and usually for a year or two into early adult life.

It is true that economic conditions now tend to delay marriage too long past the time when young people are emotionally prepared for it. If society denies marriage to young adults, it must expect a great many of them to have sexual love affairs. Early adult marriages in which the wife is self-supporting and children are postponed for several years, can help solve the problem. Also, since our educational preparations for life now extend several years past adolescence into early adult life, we may expect to see in the immediate future an increasing number of parentally subsidized marriages beginning in college life. Certainly to be able to look forward in adolescence to socially approved early adult matings would help to keep sex an emotionally responsible matter in their minds. Sexual virtue in any event needs to be defined for adolescents in terms of mutual responsibilities which they can live up to, rather than in terms of the ability to support a wife or the preservation of virginity until marriage; and it would help growing boys and girls to achieve a normal and self-controlled sexuality if they could believe that their parents and society would sympathize with their early adult experimental approaches to marriage and recognize them as attempts to make the best of what is admittedly too often a bad social-

economic mating situation. In particular, since boys can traditionally look forward to some social and parental sympathy in their experimental approaches to marriage, it is girls that need to feel in adolescence the prospect of an enlightened parental and social sympathy, if they should require it.

Though these prescriptions may seem to anxious parental minds to conduce toward red ruin and the breaking up of homes, their practical effect is quite in the contrary direction. Youth needs a slackening of the parental reins in the matter of sexual conduct in order to institute any normal and instinctive self-governance. The whole subject of sex is too haggard with morbid parental and social fears. More knowledge, more humor, and more of a sense of self-determining freedom are urgently needed in adolescence as a basis for the development of adult sexual responsibility.

Adolescent sexuality has its own instinctive course of development into responsible adult love, and is not one which parents or society need be afraid of. It is rather the consequence of the frustration and warping of this course of sexual development, by parents or society under mistaken patriarchal notions, which need be feared. Sex in its normal development is nothing to be feared. It is sex repressed and perverted and degraded into infantile neurotic promiscuity, into frigidity and impotence, into homosexuality and sadism, which ought to be feared. And the moral of all this is, very simply—we must recognize that responsible adult love and mating and family life comprise nature's own sexual goal, which young people will reach if they are given a fair chance by parents and society. Let us give them their chance.

## Other Peoples— Other Ways

CHARLES W. MARGOLD

TODAY the plea for individual freedom to experiment in sex matters is often based on the authority that such freedom exists or has existed among primitive peoples. Simpler peoples, the expressed or implied argument is, leave men and women, and especially the young and the premarried, to live their sex life pretty much in a "natural" state of freedom, socially uninfluenced and uncontrolled.

Among these peoples, the individual, it is thought, expresses in his sex conduct his personal nature, quite unhampered by any group constraints or social conventions. His love life is his own, it is argued, springing spontaneously, as it were, directly from his emotional and instinctive biological make-up.

Whether the absence of social influence in sex conduct among primitive peoples—were it true—



would form any justification for sanctioning of individual experimentation in sex conduct among us today is one question; whether the fact that social control does exist among primitive peoples is an argument against "freedom" in our own society is another, both of which seemingly remain matters for discussion by themselves. There is ample scientific, historical and ethnological evidence to show that clear factors of social control are invariably present among primitive peoples in all of the individual's acts and practices, sexual and otherwise.

### Social Control Universal

AMONG primitive peoples, it is true, life is simpler, in that it is more direct, more nearly immediately expressed and lived. With us today, desires, emotions, instincts undergo invariably a more complicated course of manners and means before they are fully satisfied. Civilized life differs from savage life in that the institutions in the former are much more complex, of finer and of more intricate character. The physiological aspects of sex are sublimated into love; instinct and emotion, into sentiment; courtship has many more conditions and requirements to meet. There is so much more finesse about it all, with all sorts of required preparations for the married state. And this again is much more intermediated, loaded, one might almost say, with worked out conditions, well understood considerations and clearly expressed "rules of the game." Yet despite the more elaborate and complex mediations which the individual's original urges take, despite our clearer realization of intervention at the hands of the group among ourselves, it remains true that the simpler, more nearly direct expressions in sex life among primitive peoples also show unmistakable group patterns.

As Professor Westermarck has long ago shown in his monumental work on the *History of Human Marriage*, as an institution regulating the sex life of men and women, marriage is universal with all tribes and primitive peoples, starting with time immemorial. With all the diversity in the form of marriage and family life, whether monogamous, polyandrous or polygynous, all savage peoples have and uphold some group-sanctioned mode of relationship between the sexes. No savage people lives an utterly promiscuous or unregulated sex life, and in no group can the individual be said to be free to experiment or do as he pleases in sex life.

Look first at the sex life of the unmarried and the premarital life of the young. There are, as a matter of fact, many tribes and primitive peoples

who are known habitually to enforce a system of premarital chastity and sexual continence at heavy penalties. Among these, innumerable customs and ways exist for keeping the sexes stringently apart before marriage. Among some tribes, boys are taught that it is a disgrace to set foot in the female part of the house, and girls, that to be seen by males is a sin. Girls are from the very earliest age prohibited from joining in the most innocent amusements with children of the opposite sex. Men and women must not sit on the same mat, nor put their clothing in the same place, nor have the same bathrooms, nor even give or take anything directly from hand to hand. Among some peoples the seducer of an unmarried girl is beaten to death and the girl is sometimes also put to death for the offense.\*

And even among tribes which permit a system of premarital promiscuity among boys and girls, there is clear evidence of social control. These controls often take the form of limitation of action due to an established taboo or an almost subconscious, quite generally accepted, group attitude. There is, for instance, among some peoples, a taboo against endogamy or incest, and among others a taboo against exogamy, or relations with other than members of the same tribe or group.

Among all peoples where promiscuity is indulged in, it is premarital, and for the young. While among many peoples it has no marriage in view, and among some it is specifically forbidden to take place between the betrothed, among others it is permitted only as a preliminary to marriage. Then there are many other group limitations on the promiscuity permitted. These pertain to the matters of pregnancy, abortion, illegitimacy; to some special physiological conditions; to the wooing and to many other matters.\*\* Even if quite diverse from group to group they are, nevertheless, compelling within their own bounds.

### Primitive Conventions

THESE form the social patterns, the group's generally worked out mode of doing things. They are no less truly present and clearly to be seen in the acts and practices, the sex conduct, of primitive peoples who follow a premarital sexual promiscuity, than in all of human life. The group has the role here, as everywhere in the society of human beings, of prescribing and directing the forms conduct takes. If we want to continue the argument, the same invariable presence of social

\*Cf. Crawley A. E., *Jour. Anthro. Inst.*, XXIV, 445 ff.

\*\*Cf., for example, the present writer's *Sex Freedom and Social Control*, The University of Chicago Press, 1926, pp. 37 seq.



influence and group patterns can be exhibited in all the sex conduct of individuals among primitive peoples. Whatever it is—what form modesty takes, or what sexual propriety, or decorum, or mode of relationship exists between the betrothed, the married, the widowed and the divorced; what forms, conditions and criteria for success courtship takes; what the individual's notions of beauty in the opposite sex are, or what constitutes special worth or valor—in each of these and in every other detail the role of the group is apparent.

Even the forms of salutation between the sexes are suggested by social custom. Kissing, for example, is a sexual practice that is, or was, altogether unknown among some peoples. To us it is a most natural form of salutation showing love and devotion, yet among many tribes and peoples it has been shown not to exist, or not to have existed, before it was introduced by white men.

"Instead, the Fijian way is to give a sharp sniff or inhalation of breath through the nostrils. The dwellers of the Hill Tracts of Chittagong kiss in a similar way. The Indians of South America rub faces; Point Barrow Eskimos used to rub noses; Hawaiian Islanders embrace with noses touching, as do Eastern Polynesians. A British Burma lover puts his arms around his sweetheart and smells her cheek. The kiss of the Malagasy is a kind of rub-

bing of noses. Maori kiss either by pressing nose to nose sideways, or by pinching the cheek, silence on the part of the one being pinched signifying his or her acceptance of the love offered. Chippeway Indians (Canada) do not kiss; instead they pull noses ceremoniously. Among the North Queensland natives, osculation is rather a rough blowing on the mouth or on the back of the shoulders, or on both cheeks. And among the Wacaga and Masai natives—more peculiarly unique than the other substitutes—one is spat upon as a sign of gratitude or endearment.\*"

And so we see that no matter how widely conventions and customs may differ, they never fail to exist. It is not, perhaps, necessary, at least in this discussion, to argue as to whether the current plea for freedom is justified by current circumstances. (In so far as "freedom" is accepted, among us, we see it, too, developing its own set of conventions.) But the point which the sociologist must make clear is that historical and comparative arguments for complete individualism in sex standards are not sound in so far as they are based on the customs of primitive peoples. Indeed, our failure to see the social customs of others simply because they differ from our own, bespeaks to many observers its own degree of immaturity.

\*Cf. *Sex Freedom and Social Control*, pp. 69-71.

## Civilization and Its Discontents

Dr. Bernard Glueck discusses Sigmund Freud's criticism of society.

YOUNG people are sent out into life as appropriately equipped to meet its adventures "as if one was to equip people going on a polar expedition with summer clothing and maps of the Italian lakes." This footnote from Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, which was quoted by Dr. Bernard Glueck as the reason which prompted him to discuss the book before a meeting at the Child Study Association on January 27, continues—"That the upbringing of young people at the present day conceals from them the part sexuality will play in their lives is not the only reproach we are obliged to bring against it. It offends, too, in not pre-

paring them for the aggressions of which they are destined to become the objects. One can clearly see that ethical standards are being misused in a way. The strictness of these standards would not do much harm if education were to say, 'This is how men ought to be happy and make others happy, but you have to reckon with their not being so.' Instead of this the young are made to believe that everyone else conforms to the standards of ethics, i.e. that everyone else is good. And then on this is based the demand that the young shall be so too."

Dr. Glueck went on to state his personal conviction that anyone who is not completely blinded by

the customary defensive and compensatory illusions which humanity clings to in its endeavor to tolerate the dissatisfactions which life brings with it will appreciate how true Freud's comments are.

To one who is constantly faced in his daily occupation with the tragic consequences of this "fairy tale" view of life which permeates the customary settings of home and school and church, the crass unfairness of the deceptions imposed upon youth by an adult world, itself too timid to face the realities of life, appears as an unforgivable sin. And, therefore, a conscientious endeavor to grasp and absorb what Professor Freud has to tell us about the significance, for the destiny of the individual, of contemporary culture might give us a little more insight into the meaning of life and a little more courage to face its realities.

He referred also to the general impression that discouragement and pessimism run through the book, and pointed out that not pessimism but the necessity of facing the truth about oneself, however painful, is repeatedly referred to in the Freudian philosophy as having beneficial effects of enduring value.

### Man's Quest for Happiness

In taking up only certain chapters, Dr. Glueck pointed out that this is a work extraordinarily difficult to condense or abstract. What it really needs is expansion. His discussion of the central theme of the book follows:

Freud leaves in this book his customary pursuit of the minutiae in the make-up and functioning of man, that is, his microscopic tool, and turns to the use of the telescope in an attempt to envisage the entire human drama in the setting of the culture which man has created for himself.

The question he sets out to examine is "does this man-made culture make possible the attainment of human happiness?" One might ask the same question by saying "does this culture serve the purpose of human life?" In putting it in this manner Freud at once challenges all those notions concerning the purpose of human life which are premised on theories of special creation; he prefers to seek the answer in the behavior of men themselves.

What does men's behavior reveal as regards the purpose and object of their lives, what do they demand of life and wish to attain in it? The answer, Freud says, cannot be mistaken; they seek happiness, they want to become happy and remain so. The thing that is called happiness in its narrowest sense, according to Freud, comes from the satisfac-

tion, most often instantaneous, of pent up needs which have reached great intensity, and by its very nature can be only a transitory experience.

"When any condition desired by the pleasure principle is protracted, it results in a feeling only of mild comfort; we are so constituted that we can only intensely enjoy contrasts, much less intensely states in themselves. Our possibilities for happiness are thus limited from the start by our very constitution."

The kind of adjustment to life which makes possible the achievement of happiness even in this very narrow sense, depends upon striking a workable compromise between two sets of contending claims for the control of the personality—instinct and culture. The elements which contribute to the varied and more or less persistent conflicts between these opposing tendencies are derived not only from the opposition between culture and self-realization, but also from the limitations of man's constitution itself. Happiness, like goodness and social adaptability, is an achievement in spite of obstacles which crowd the road toward it. It is much less difficult to be unhappy, Freud adds, and sees our suffering derived from three quarters: from our own body, which is destined to decay and dissolution and cannot ever dispense with anxiety and pain as danger signals; from the outer world which can rage against us with the most powerful and pitiless processes of destruction; and finally from our relations with other men. He concludes, "The goal towards which the pleasure principle impels us, of becoming happy, is not attainable, yet we may not, cannot give up the effort to come nearer the realization of it by some means or other."

Very different paths may be taken toward it; some assume the positive aspect of the aims, attainment of pleasure; others the negative, avoidance of pain. By none of these ways can we achieve all that we desire.

We must limit ourselves to a consideration of the difficulties which come from man's relation to his fellow men, to the social sources of our distresses, since this will lead us more directly to the central theme of Freud's thesis. He defines culture as the sum of the achievements and institutions which differentiate our lives from those of our animal forbears and serve two purposes, namely that of protecting humanity against nature and of regulating the relations of human beings among themselves. Why should this be a source of suffering, why should not the systems we have ourselves created rather insure protection and well being for us all? The social scientists have been puzzled by that very

*(Continued on page 274)*



# Parents' Questions and Discussions

*Parents today have generally recognized the validity of the child's interest in matters of sex and have accepted their responsibilities for sex instruction. Intellectual acceptance, however, often in conflict with the parents' own emotional attitudes, gives rise to much bewilderment. This is evidenced in the strikingly recurring questions which parents bring to study groups.*

*Should we wait for the child to ask where babies come from before giving him this information, or should we stimulate him to ask?*

Normally, the child who feels free to do so will ask that question at some time before he is five or six, and there is no reason to give him the information until he does express this interest. If a child of school age has not yet asked about it in some form we may be reasonably sure that something has already occurred to inhibit his natural questionings. In that case we would do well to make opportunities for such questions—through natural conversations about or visits to a newborn baby or prospective mother. At six years, or thereabouts, the child needs to know the answer to this question in the simplest possible terms. Beyond the barest facts he will probably need little information, but he does need to feel perfectly free to ask further questions as they arise.

*When and how shall we tell the little child about physical sex differences? \**

While the child toddles about in his attempt to acquaint himself with the world in which he lives he should have free range to see both sexes. As soon as he becomes articulate, he will ask questions in regard to the differences, as well as to other matters of interest to him. Such questions must be our guide. Faulty education begins when we give the very young child impressions of shut doors. Nurses or mothers who quickly cover the baby when a child of the other sex approaches put the first stumbling block in the way of the child's proper attitude toward the human body.

*Should we ask a young child to keep as a secret our conversation about the coming of a baby? \**

To begin with this is asking the impossible. If we could succeed in making a five-year-old keep that secret, what a powerful impression we must have

made! Such a suggestion might prevent the child from looking at anything connected with birth in a normal, wholesome way. There is a danger, too, that it would destroy the free and easy relationship between parent and child which makes for natural conversation and provides constant opportunity for adding information and correcting erroneous impressions.

*What if the child seems to show too great an interest in sex matters? \**

Persistent interest and questioning does not necessarily indicate a morbid concentration on sex, but rather an unsatisfied curiosity. It may be that the parent's very reticence in answering questions has intensified the curiosity concerning sex matters. Or perhaps there has been some experience which is troubling him. Very often it means that we have been too eager to tell the child what *we* think he ought to know, instead of helping him to become articulate. Encouraging him to frame questions or make statements freely may reveal to us where *he* may be in his thinking about such questions as where babies come from, for instance, and the meaning of the physical differences between the sexes. Out of such expressions on his part we may know what has contributed to the child's over-interest in sex matters and may then be able to shape our own attitude and practices toward helping him.

*One of the difficulties connected with the child's attitude toward sex seems to be due to the association of the sex organs with the organs of elimination. How may we overcome this difficulty? \**

The general attitude toward food elimination needs to be revised. Elimination must be considered not as something unclean but as a natural and

\* Discussion of these four questions is reprinted from the pamphlet, *When Children Ask About Babies*, published by the Child Study Association of America.

interesting process. We can help the child if we lead him to think of the organs of the body in connection with their specific functions rather than as either clean or dirty.

*A mother who has always frankly answered her little girl's questions is dismayed to find the child, at seven years, indulging in sex play with a boy the same age.*

Such expressions are perfectly normal in children of that age, and we are inclined to attach to them an emotional content which is really not there. From infancy the child has come to feel that certain areas of the body have special significance. It is natural that he or she should become interested to know as much as possible about these parts, and thus be led to explore some other child. Then, too, there is the other side of this kind of sex play: the childish exhibitionism, which centers about these usually covered areas. We must expect both of these forms of expression and accept them as natural at that level. At the same time, we must find ways to redirect this interest into more suitable channels. We can help the child progressively to express this need for exploring or exhibiting in ways that are more acceptable. Costumes to "dress up" in, "playing theater" and similar outlets will help to place these expressions on a positive level. We must also see to it that the child's curiosity about the opposite sex is satisfied in a natural way through casual opportunities to see other children bathing and dressing.

*If we do not stop masturbation when it first appears in early childhood is there not danger that the child, finding this sensation pleasurable, will continue it until it becomes a habit too strong to break?*

The young child, as a rule, discovers only accidentally the pleasure to be derived from his sex organs. Quite naturally he explores this interest further, without any sense of right or wrong except such as he may gather from the expressions (verbal or otherwise) of those around him. But normally he will pursue this interest only until others more engrossing begin to fill his life. We have to remember that in this, as in other things, we shed our habits as we develop new interests. As the child grows into a life that is full and rich, there is much less opportunity to indulge in play with himself and much less desire. If the child can meet all of the new things that crowd in upon him and make good use of them, he will very soon drop his interest in his body, and find his satisfactions outside of himself.

It is only when life is too hard for him, when he feels himself insecure, inadequate, unloved or unable to meet life satisfactorily on an outgoing basis, that he may revert to himself, finding comfort in himself without effort. If, then, this habit persists it is not only because he is getting pleasure out of it, but largely because he is *not* getting pleasure out of other situations which ought to enrich his life. In that case, it is not the masturbation we need be concerned about but rather the child's need for help in meeting life on a sounder basis.

*Where brother and sister have always bathed and dressed together, without any undue curiosity or interest, should this be stopped when they are nine and eleven years old, and if so, how can it be done without making them self-conscious?*

When children have reached the pre-pubertal age this kind of freedom has already served its purpose. We must keep in mind that both children are progressing toward sexual maturity, which brings its own drives. It is perhaps because of these drives that children at this time are likely to become self-conscious in regard to their own feelings. Respecting this, we are bound to protect them from situations which may stimulate new and disturbing emotions.

The changed relationship of brother and sister can be established gradually without calling it to their attention. The need for privacy usually develops with adolescence. The more we grow in experience and thought the less is it possible to keep on sharing all our experiences and thoughts with other people. Thus as we mature and life becomes more complex the need for privacy becomes more pressing—and with it goes respect for the other person's privacy as well.

*In a family where the children have been accustomed to seeing their parents bathing and dressing, at what age should this be stopped?*

Lest something "covered" may suggest something "secret" or "shameful," young children should have free opportunity to see the nude human form, whether of other children or of adults. But after the child has become familiar with nudity so that his interest and curiosity are satisfied there is nothing to be gained by going to extremes. We are, after all, a clothed people as we live today; and overemphasis on nudity creates a situation perhaps more artificial and strained than would overemphasis on being covered. As the child grows older he comes to accept body covering not as a conces-



sion to shame but as a matter of custom. Similarly he comes to appreciate our desire for privacy in dressing and bathing as privacy but not secrecy. The adolescent feels this need himself, and if no false standard is set up for him he will himself withdraw from the earlier family intimacy.

*At what age should we inform the girl about menstruation and the boy about emissions? Should each be told also about the other's pubertal development?*

Knowledge about one another's development at puberty will help toward a mutual understanding between the sexes. One cannot set a definite time for giving this information for all children, since some girls and some boys mature earlier than others, either physically or emotionally. In general, however, we must recognize that between the ages of ten and twelve both girls and boys become increasingly interested in sex in all its manifestations. They will need information to protect them from either the effects of misinformation or the possible shock of an early experience for which they have not been prepared and which they do not know how to interpret. It is well that they should have the needed physiological facts some time before the age when emotional stress will make these facts more difficult to receive.

*A boy of thirteen has never asked any questions about sex, and blushes when anyone else does. His mother wishes to give him information on the subject, but finds it difficult because he becomes so painfully embarrassed. Should she persist?*

Where an intimate relationship between mother and child has not been established during childhood it is difficult and probably unwise to try to create it at thirteen. At that age the whole subject is already so strongly colored emotionally that a purely objective discussion of it is out of the question. In such a case it would be wise for the mother to remain in the background, and to ask the father, or some male relative or friend with whom the boy feels intimate, to take up with him the question of his needs. A skilful person would help the boy to talk about what he already knows or would like to know, offering to "set him straight" about anything that is puzzling him.

*What about giving sex information to a child who is not our own but who asks us questions?*

If the child is very little we may find it easy to put off the question until we have ascertained his mother's attitude or obtained her permission to answer the child's questions. If the child is older we may judge from the question itself whether the

child has had earlier information at home to which this is simply a "next question," or whether he has come to us because he cannot get the information at home. We cannot well put off such questions without arousing an unfortunate suspicion of secrecy, but in answering them we have to keep in mind the child's relation to his parents. Whatever way we have met the child's questions, we would do well to let his mother know of his interest and of the information we have given.

*What are we to say when our children ask questions that relate to the sordid aspects of sex—for example, when a twelve-year-old girl asks the meaning of a "white slave" headline in the newspaper?*

We could not, if we would, keep our children from knowledge of what is going on in the world they live in. We must remember that interest is stimulated regardless of whether it is wholesome or timely. We need not elaborate on details with which the child is not yet concerned. Our explanations, however, must fully satisfy the immediate interest, and our manner be such as to invite further questions as these arise. The sordid aspect will not be unduly emphasized if the child has opportunity to know about the wholesome manifestations of sex in the life around her. We have to realize also that on questions of social morality, such as prostitution, illegitimacy or extra-marital relations, we shall inevitably be imparting to the child our own attitudes and ideals along with whatever factual information we give. In a world of many different standards, of many kinds of people and modes of conduct, our children have a right to look to us not only for information, but for guidance.

*Will children who have been fully informed by their parents in matters relating to sex be thereby spared emotional sex difficulties in adolescence?*

"Information" becomes "knowledge" only when it can be interpreted by the individual in terms of his own experience. Only as the emotional needs of the child develops will he know how to make use of much that, until then, has been merely "information." The struggle and emotional ferment of adolescence are a part of the growth process itself which no amount of fore-knowledge will prevent. It is well that he should have accurate information to bring to his emotional needs; and it is also well that he should come to adolescence with a feeling of confidence in his parents and freedom to communicate with them, so that they may give continued wise guidance through this difficult period of adjustment.

# Sex Education by the Book

*The reading matter we offer children reflects a varied approach.*

"WHAT is a good book to give to a child to answer her questions about life?" That, with slight variations, is the question which comes perhaps more frequently and more fervently than any other to those who work with parents.

The need that is expressed here is a very real one—plainly, the parents' own. For parents have taken seriously the dictum of the psychologist and the psychiatrist that "sex education begins at home." But however willing they may be to accept this responsibility they often find themselves emotionally and intellectually ill prepared for the task. Is there not, then, "a good book" that will say for them these things they find so difficult to say themselves?

Not a few attempts have been made to answer that question. Within the past decade we have seen a wide variety of efforts at sex education "by the book." These have ranged all the way from the most sentimental recitals of the "sacred story" to the most vigorous statements of biological fact, ignoring altogether the human equation. A little book published in 1912 counsels mother to "take the little one upon her knee in the quiet twilight hour" and say, "Mother has a beautiful story to tell you. It's just like a wonderful fairy story, only it's true. And what makes it more fascinating still, it's all about you and mother. Didn't you ever wonder, dear, where you came from, and how you happened to be mother's little boy? Well, that's what she's going to tell you about right now."

We have come a long way from this attitude of bated breath when we find in the newest popular magazine the blithe statement, "There is no real reason why in the lower grades of the public schools young children should not be taught everything that mankind knows about sex just as they are taught arithmetic or reading." More thoughtful writers, however, find sex education not so simple as that, for the very reason that, unlike arithmetic or reading, an understanding of the role of sex in life depends upon human contacts and human relationships for its growth.

It is difficult to find any book which, taken alone, will do the parent's job of sex education. There

are, however, one or two which will help the parent to clarify her own concept, suggesting a terminology and a suitable approach.

*Growing Up* is a little book addressed directly to the youngest reader. Unlike its sentimental predecessors it begins with the facts of human conception, birth and growth. With this as its constant theme, it then goes on to relate human reproduction to the whole schematic plan of animal life, concluding with the ideology and romance of human mating.

In *The Way Life Begins* we have an excellent presentation of the reproduction processes in nature, suggesting the use of nature study as an approach in the sex education of young children. For the child who already understands the elementary facts of human reproduction this book might well be used to clarify some of its aspects. Especially helpful in this regard are the excellent illustrations and diagrams. Conscious of the limitations of this approach, however, the authors express this sane warning in their concluding chapter: "There is no intention to maintain here that nature study, even though it deal with the entire life history of living creatures rather than conventionally acceptable portions of them, will of itself solve the problems of youth, or indeed, greatly lessen the strain of the 'storm and stress' period. It is asserted, however, that such information will be of service especially when given early, and by those who can make it a part of the wisdom of life. In fact, nature study, thus understood, is only another cultural influence, a means such as all culture offers of looking upon life broadly and humanely." "Mere facts, of themselves, will not go far . . . ."

While neither of these books will wholly "answer the child's questions about life," both will be valuable to supplement or clarify the parents' own answers.

For adolescent boys and girls, however, and for the youth growing into adulthood, we find a somewhat more satisfactory literature suited to their own reading.

*Sex in Life* is a small pamphlet addressed to boys and girls just entering adolescence. It outlines brief-



ly and simply the biological facts of puberty, placing its emphasis upon sex hygiene and the health needs of the growing boy and girl.

For the somewhat older adolescent Mary Ware Dennett's pamphlet, *The Sex Side of Life* goes beyond the purely biological facts to meet some of the questions which grow inevitably out of the new and disturbing emotional drives of youth. Clear and sane in its presentation of facts, the pamphlet also presents the ethical and spiritual aspects of the love relationship with fine idealism and without sentimentality.

The United States Public Health Service addresses to boys and young men a leaflet *Keeping Fit* which confines itself to the hygiene of sex. It is a plea for sex health for the sake of the future generation. An entirely different approach is found in a pamphlet prepared by the Young Men's Christian Association and the American Social Hygiene Association, *The Question of Petting*. This little pamphlet concerns itself, not with facts but with ideals, not with biology but with the emotional needs of youth.

For the youth of college age there will remain many unanswered questions, many conflicts of thought and many uncertainties in regard to standards and ideals. He may, perhaps, find clarifying to his own thinking a frank and dispassionate discussion of the relations of men and women. A number of books of this nature are available. Outstanding among these is *The Sex Life of Youth*. Neither a preachment nor a dogma, this book offers a sympathetic discussion of the major problems which confront young men and women in their relations with one another. Its chapter headings indicate its

scope; among them: Human Sex Hunger; The Pre-Engagement Years; Petting; Auto-Erotism; The Choice of a Mate.

The maturing youth will necessarily get much of his knowledge of life from the world as he sees it and reads about it. Real knowledge comes not in sets of facts but in living and seeing, feeling and thinking. Thus no one book, no one point of view, no one set of values will suffice to give the young person adequate guidance through the maze of new emotions, new thoughts and new forces which challenge him. Beyond factual knowledge youth needs insight into himself and orientation in his world. Toward this we may help him, not so much by scientific treatises on sex, as by guiding his reading to a choice of the best in contemporary literature that deals with life itself.

JOSETTE FRANK

Growing Up.

By Karl de Schweinitz. The Macmillan Co. 111 pp. 1928.

Keeping Fit.

The United States Public Health Service. 11 pp. 1924.

The Question of Petting.

By Max J. Exner. Association Press. 22 pp. 1926.

Sex in Life.

By Donald B. and Eunice B. Armstrong. The American Social Hygiene Association. 16 pp. 1916.

The Sex Life of Youth.

By Grace Loucks Elliott and Harry Bone. Association Press. 146 pp. 1929.

The Sex Side of Life.

By Mary Ware Dennett, 81 Singer Street, Astoria, Long Island, N. Y. 27 pp. 1928.

The Way Life Begins.

By Bertha C. and Vernon M. Cady. The American Social Hygiene Association. 80 pp. 1917.

## Book Reviews

### *Varied Treatments of a Universal Interest*

*Sex Education and Training in Chastity.* By Rev. Felix M. Kirsch. Forward by The Most Rev. John T. McNicholas. Benziger Bros. 540 pages. 1930.

The Encyclical by Pope Pius XI on Christian Education with its reference to sex education caused widespread comment. In this book, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, we have an exhaustive

treatment of sex education from the Roman Catholic point of view.

In the introduction we have a clear statement of the tradition of the church. It is on the basis of that tradition and ever keeping it in mind that we must view the body of the text. In nineteen chapters it discusses, together with many other important phases of the question, such topics as: Urgency of the Prob-

lem; Experimenting with Sex Instruction in the Schools; The Need of Sex Instruction; What Must Be Told; How Shall It Be Told; and Adolescence and the Association Between the Sexes.

The scholarly examination of the subject matter is demonstrated not only by the text but also by the most complete bibliography on sex education that one could possibly demand. It is all-inclusive. The author in referring to this bibliography says, "The mention of a work does not imply that the publication is recommended for general reading. In fact, some of the books listed are based on false principles. Yet they are included in the list because they assisted the writer in studying the subject of sex education and may, therefore, prove helpful to Catholic research workers generally in examining the very complex problem."

Nor has the author used these authorities for purposes of disagreement, but has rather quoted them for the particular contribution they make, of course, only to the extent that these contributions do not violate the essence of Catholic dogma. To those who are interested in a scholarly presentation, and an historic treatment of sex education, as well as to those who are interested in the Roman Catholic point of view and procedure in sex education this book will commend itself.

CÉCILE PILPEL

*The Psychology of Sex.* By Erwin Wexberg. Translation by W. Beran Wolfe. Farrar & Rinehart. 215 pages. 1931.

In discussing the psychology of sex the rule seems frequently to be to interpret all aspects of life in terms of sex. In this volume the author reverses this attitude and interprets sex in terms of many sided living. His main thesis might almost be said to be that of the individual's responsibility for his own life. This applies, Dr. Wexberg feels, just as inexorably to the individual's sex behavior as it does to his behavior in money matters or in social relationships. Every man and woman must be prepared, through understanding his own nature and the nature of other people, to play his part intelligently in the changing drama of everyday life; and as all other human relationships change, so also do those which center about sex.

Throughout the book there occur many wise and helpful passages. These are points worth digging for, but it must be confessed that digging is more or less required in order to find them. Perhaps this is the fault of translation; perhaps the somewhat labored style is due to the author's too frequently repeated references to Adler's individual psychology.

Then, too, while it is not necessary to expect every psychologist to agree with Freud, it does not add to the strength of the present discussion to make an issue of their differences of opinion, as the author now and then appears to do. There is also a preface by the translator, Dr. W. Beran Wolfe, including a discussion of birth control, which adds little that is relevant.

The keynote of insistence on personal responsibility for one's own happiness is particularly striking in Wexberg's discussion of such topics as, for instance, "the meaning of jealousy." He admits that the feeling of possession is an essential and indeed desirable part of "being in love," but at the same time points out that jealousy is its own confession of failure. "Because fidelity can only be given, and never demanded, all jealousy is false and senseless." In addition to the problems of adult lovers, the conflicts of the adolescent and the psychological significance of perversion are dissected and explained in his own terms.

The concluding chapter on Sex Education really sums up the whole of his philosophy. He suggests that a program for sex education might cover the four points here discussed—sexuality, reproduction, sex and character, and love. The child must be taught about these in such a way as to impress him with the ideal of sex education—"the correct sexual behavior is that which furthers the commonweal." In spite of the significance of this chapter, the author treats specific sex education somewhat briefly because of his belief that—"That reader who really understands the interrelation of sex and personality patterns will find specific advice in sexual education superfluous, while anyone who does not understand these fundamental relativities will not understand how to enlighten a child sexually, no matter how specific our suggestions might be." For those who are interested in human happiness *The Psychology of Sex*, in spite of its difficulties, is well worth reading.

ZILPHA CARRUTHERS FRANKLIN.

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#### A NEW BOOK LIST—FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

*will be published by the Child Study Association in the early summer.*

The first book list appeared in 1914. The 1931 edition is being very carefully edited by the Bibliography Committee of the Child Study Association on the basis of its seventeen years' experience. The books chosen for inclusion in the List have been selected for their practical application to parental problems and for their authoritativeness. New trends in parent education are indicated by new divisions. All of the books in this list will be found in the Association Library at Headquarters.



# News and Notes

Not education, and not the child, but the world as a whole, was the starting point taken by Dr. George S. Counts of Teachers College, Columbia University, in his lecture on "Education in an Industrial Civilization," at Child Study Association Headquarters on April 15. Dr. Counts showed how instability—by which the world is characterized today in politics, in religion, and in our social and economic life—affects home and family relationships. He suggested that among the many traditions which are thus most urgently challenged is the ideal of male supremacy.

Our life today is marked by three outstanding characteristics—change, integration and power. As to change, no man today can assume his children will grow up in the world as he, himself, knows it. Dr. Counts suggested that we are living increasingly in "the great society," rather than in the small group; thus community and even family life comes to be less and less important. But of these three characteristics, power, he believes, is infinitely the most startling. We are not only capable of producing all the goods we need and more, but we have immeasurably increased our power over life and death. Today education must face the whole range of society's problems. The speaker suggested that all the tasks of our time are tasks of education. It must serve as a kind of social intelligence; it must conserve old values and create new ones. This implies not only a new kind of education, but a new kind of teacher whose equipment is not based on narrow pedagogy. Education must be conceived not in terms of school situations, but in terms of life.

A special meeting on the father and his interests in parent education which was held at Association Headquarters on April 13, brought forth so many varied and enlightening opinions that it is planned to continue the discussion through the pages of CHILD STUDY sometime during the coming year. While no final "philosophy of fatherhood" was developed, the men—fathers themselves—who participated, brought out definite points as to what fathers think about their own wants and needs in parent

education. Among those who talked were: Dr. Leonard Blumgart, Mr. T. L. Cotton, Mr. Lawrence K. Frank, Dr. Benjamin C. Gruenberg, Mr. E. C. Lindeman, Dr. Edward Reisner, Mr. Robert Simon.

It seems especially appropriate that the May Day 1931 program be based upon the findings of the White House Conference which have been expressed in the nineteen fundamental points known as The Children's Charter. The keynote of the day, "Community Responsibility and Cooperation for Child Health and Protection," can be made most effective by the promotion and support of, first, adequate full time community health service with emphasis on the infant and preschool child; second, an adequate school health program.

In New York City where the May Day Campaign is to center around children between two and six years of age, a special committee has recently been organized by Commissioner Shirley Wynne to stress particularly periodical health examination. An intensive educational campaign, also under the leadership of the Department of Health, will include the sending of letters to parents of over one million school children.

Challenge of the Children's Charter  
In calling its thirty-fifth annual convention at Hot Springs, Arkansas, from May 3 to 7, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers accepts the challenge of the Children's Charter to discover how the Charter's nineteen principles may be realized "for every child, regardless of race, color, or situation, wherever he may live under the protection of the American flag." Among the many interesting addresses to be given are: The Parents of Tomorrow, Vocational Guidance, Three Objectives of Education, the Exceptional Child, and Education in Radio.

With the cooperation of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, plans have been made for a National Conference on Parent Education to be held on May 1 and 2. This will be the first nation-wide meeting called by the United States Office of Education to bring together lay and pro-

professional agencies engaged in parent education projects and promotion. Attention will be focused on the responsibilities which schools and other agencies concerned with the welfare of children have for child development and parent education.

The Connecticut State Conference of Social Work is holding its twenty-first annual session at Bridgeport from April 26 to 28. Eight Institutes are being offered in connection with the Conference to discuss principles, techniques and skill in social work under the leadership of outstanding specialists. They will cover Case Work in Institutions, Skills in Case Work, the Psychiatric Approach to Case Work, Mental Hygiene, the Juvenile Court, Child Placing, Community Planning, with one Institute for board members of public and private welfare agencies. The program also includes general sessions on the Visiting Teacher, Research Methods, Health, Unemployment and Recreation.

The Lehigh Valley Child Helping Conference to be held at Allentown, Pennsylvania, on May 23, has chosen for the theme of its twenty-second annual meeting, "Adjusting the Environment to the Child's Needs." President James Struthers Heberling, Professor of Child Helping, William T. Carter Foundation of the University of Pennsylvania, will open the Conference with a brief address, to be followed by Dr. Lois Hayden Meek, Director of the Child Development Institute of Columbia University, Dr. William A. McAndrew, Associate Superintendent of the Schools of New York City, and Miss Grace Abbott, Director of the National Children's Bureau. These three speakers of national prominence have chosen as their topics: Parental Understanding and Cooperation; The Environment of Success in the Case of Children and Others; and The Children's Charter and Its Emphasis on an Enriching Environment in the Life of the Child.

The "Save the Children International Conference on African Children" is organizing an International Conference on African Children to be held at Geneva from June 22 to 25. The object of the Conference is to offer those interested in the lot of African children an opportunity to discuss their experiences on an independent platform, and to collaborate in deciding upon the best means of solving some of the most ur-

gent social and health problems in Africa. The influence of civilization and contact with European industry and ways of living have had an unsettling effect on the African peoples, and the break-up of their domestic systems has resulted in great suffering, of which the economic and moral significance is of real importance for other peoples as well.

Our high schools have experienced recently so many and such far-reaching changes that a large scale investigation seemed desirable. Therefore in 1929 Congress provided for a National Survey of Secondary Education which was to investigate the organization of schools and districts; the secondary school population and related problems; administrative and supervisory problems; and the curriculum and related problems. Work on practically all projects is now under way and the report will probably be completed by the summer of 1932. Leonard V. Koos, Associate Director of the Survey, pointed out in a recent article that this three-year study is not merely to determine the status or trends of our secondary schools, but to appraise conditions and practices found, as far as instruments of appraisal are at hand.

At Ben Shemen in Palestine, Dr. Siegfried Lehman has founded a self-governing Children's Village, for Jewish orphans, who come for the most part from Russia. The village is managed on the basis of a commercial enterprise, having its own capital and its own financial system. All contribute to the welfare of the community and are completely self-supporting. The children work at whatever interests them—in the garden, field or house—and learn in school the theory of the activities of which they have had practical experience. In this manner they gain an all-round knowledge of the subjects acquired, and when they leave the community at the age of eighteen each is equipped with a trade or skill. They return later to give one year of volunteer work to repay the cost of their education and training.

Questions on child training will be answered by staff members of the Child Study Association over the radio every Friday afternoon at 2:30. Questions may be sent to WEAf, 711 Fifth Avenue, New York City, or the Association's Headquarters, 221 West 57th Street.



## In the Magazines

*Causes of Failure and Success in School.* By Joseph Miller. *The Educational Method*, March 1931.

In this article are given the procedure and results of an investigation made in the city schools of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, "to determine the number of mentally defective children" and "to determine the causes of success and failure in the school-room." Nine specific recommendations are given as to how the schools should cope with the problems brought to light by this study.

*Creative Expression Through Dramatics.* *Progressive Education*, January 1931.

The issue, devoted entirely to a consideration of "creative expression through dramatics," includes an article by Berta Rantz describing the steps by which a play was written and produced at the Walden School by a group of thirteen- and fourteen-year-old children; a description of "Dramatic Play in the Nursery School," by Harriet M. Johnson; an article by Ruth Doing telling of her work in rhythm; and one by Virginia Somes Anderson describing "The Verse Speaking Choir"; also a selected list of reference books and plays for the school theater, compiled by Marjorie Seligman.

*Creative Music for School and Home.* By Satis N. Coleman. *Child Welfare*, January 1931.

The need of the child and grown-up to play some musical instrument is discussed in relation to the use of simple instruments, number notation, the value of making and playing these instruments and the value of home music.

*The Dominant Mother.* By Pryns Hopkins. *The New Era*, January 1931.

Illustrates the dangerous effects on the child of a "dominant mother" who makes him always play a submissive and subordinate role.

*The First Five Years Are the Hardest.* By Dr. Karl M. Bowman. *Junior Home*, February 1931.

A discussion of the behavior problems arising in the first five years of a child's life.

*Mental Hygiene.* *Childhood Education*, April 1931.

Such authorities as Douglas A. Thom, Caroline B. Zachry, Frances Dummer Logan, Elizabeth L. Woods, Hattie S. Parrott, E. Lee Vincent, Janet Fowler Nelson, Harold Anderson and Mary Shattuck Fisher have written articles for this issue of

*Childhood Education* from the parent point of view of mental hygiene.

*The Nursery School in Developing Friendliness.* Louisa C. Wagoner. *American Childhood*, February 1931.

The nature and values of the opportunities given in nursery schools for developing the social feelings of the young child.

*Outdoor Painting for Children.* By Victor D'Amico. *American Childhood*, March 1931.

A plea for letting children draw and paint out-of-doors where they can actually see the objects that they are trying to portray, instead of having to reproduce them from memory indoors.

*The Parent's Part in Sex Education.* By Helen T. Woolley. *Parents' Magazine*, May 1931.

A helpful procedure in sex education written as a guide to parents of young children and adolescents.

*Play and Play Materials.* By Christine Heinig. *Recreation*, April 1931.

The importance of play in the development of the child is stressed in this article, and kinds of play materials suitable for different ages are suggested.

*Science Looks at People.* *Graphic Survey*, April 1931.

For this issue, experts in various scientific fields have been called in to throw light on some of the problems that people today are facing as to "what and where we are, where we want to go and how to get there." H. S. Jennings, in his article on "Nature and Nurture," explains how identical and fraternal twins develop, describes their likeness and differences after birth and how they are affected by environment. In "The Telltale Skeleton," T. Wingate Todd shows how a study of the living bone reveals the story of growth. Frank N. Freeman discusses and defines intelligence. "The Pattern of Personality" is the title of Abraham Myerson's article. Among other contributors, are Donald Slesinger, William Fielding Ogburn and Henry Platt Fairchild.

*When Is a Family a Success?* By Zilpha Carruthers Franklin. *Parents' Magazine*, April 1931.

Some of the pitfalls on the road toward making the family a success are pointed out, and a few constructive suggestions given.

## Civilization and Its Discontents

(Continued from page 264)

same query and have always turned to various utopias as solutions. Our quarrel with these programs is that they seem curiously enough to ignore the obvious fact that man is creator of his own culture and that this creation must inevitably carry the stamp of the constitution of man. Freud proceeds to an examination of the achievements and benefits of culture and has no difficulty in demonstrating how near God-like man has become in his technical achievements, albeit he is a God with artificial legs and borrowed propensities. And while no one wishes to minimize the importance for happiness, which man's technical achievement makes possible, still, far from minimizing man's discontent with the civilization he has created, the dissatisfactions seem to increase with the progress of the technical, non-human phases of civilization. He then draws some parallels between the evolutionary process of culture and the process of individual development. This process of cultural evolution can be described in terms of the modification it effects in the known human instinctual dispositions which it is our life's task to satisfy. Some instincts become, so to speak, absorbed and in their place something in the nature of a character trait develops a reaction formation. Others have to be induced to change the conditions of their gratification, to find it along other paths; sublimation makes possible scientific, artistic, ideological activities, that play such an important role in civilized life.

Finally, civilization is built upon renunciation of instinctual gratifications. This "cultural privation" dominates the whole field of social relations between human beings, and when carried to excess it is bound to cause serious disorders.

Another source of conflict with and opposition to culture comes from the tendency of culture to set restrictions upon the sexual life of the individual affecting in this respect both man and woman. It is an indispensable tendency of the process of culture to impose these restrictions since it obtains a great part of the mental energy it needs by subtracting it from sexuality. Freud, himself, says that "Psychologically it (civilization) is fully justified in beginning by censuring any manifestations of the sexual life of children, for there would be no prospect of curbing the sexual desires of adults if the ground had not been prepared for it in childhood. Nevertheless there is no sort of justification for the lengths beyond this to which civilized society goes in actually

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denying the existence of these manifestations, which are not merely demonstrable but positively glaring."

It is becoming generally accepted that the casualties resulting from these conflicts between the requirements of culture and those of instinct constitute the bulk of the psychoneurotic and otherwise maladjusted people among us. For the rest of humanity the necessities for adaptation to the demands of culture constitute most miseries of civilized life.

## The Price of Civilization

As the final link in the entire discussion Freud asks himself—What becomes of this instinct which man loves so dearly to satisfy through his aggressive tendencies toward his fellow men? He replies—After all, the fact that culture does maintain itself, the fact that men and races and nations do succeed in living in amity together, presupposes the capacity of man to deal at least part of the time in such a way with this aggressive tendency as to render it harmless to his fellowmen. This is possible because when the child first meets with the opposition of its environmental authority to the gratification of his instinct, his own reactive aggressiveness is aroused.

But to give vent to aggressiveness invites the further danger of loss of love and protection without which survival in his state of helplessness becomes seriously threatened. He accepts the external inhibited authority by means of an identification of it with all its implications, has to learn the greater wisdom of restricting his impulses and incorporates the entire experience into an aspect of his nature which becomes separated from his ego in the form of what is known as the super ego. Man succeeds only in curbing his lust to hurt others through having succeeded in establishing a kind of redirection of these impulses which in the form of super ego become directed against himself. And all instinctual restriction which culture demands of man, therefore, has the same capacity of heightening his sense of guilt and need for punishment.

It is this which leads Freud finally to say in justification of his detailed elaboration of the nature and tendencies of the super ego that "It faithfully corresponds to my intention to represent the sense of guilt as the most important problem in the evolution of culture and to convey that the price of progress in civilization is paid in forfeiting happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt."

*Civilization and Its Discontents.* By Sigmund Freud. Translated by Joan Riviere. Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 144 pages. 1930.



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### STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912

Of CHILD STUDY, published monthly, September through June, at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1931.

County of New York } ss.  
State of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Cora Flusser, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the Business Manager of CHILD STUDY, and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in Section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher, Child Study Association of America, 231 W. 57th St., New York, N. Y.  
Editor, None.  
Managing Editor, None.  
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2. That the owner is: Child Study Association of America, a philanthropic educational corporation without stockholders, 231 West 57th Street, New York; Mrs. Howard S. Gans, President.

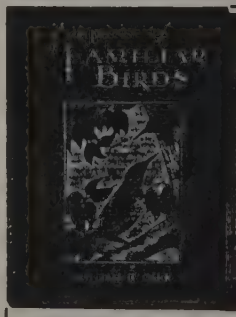
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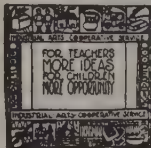
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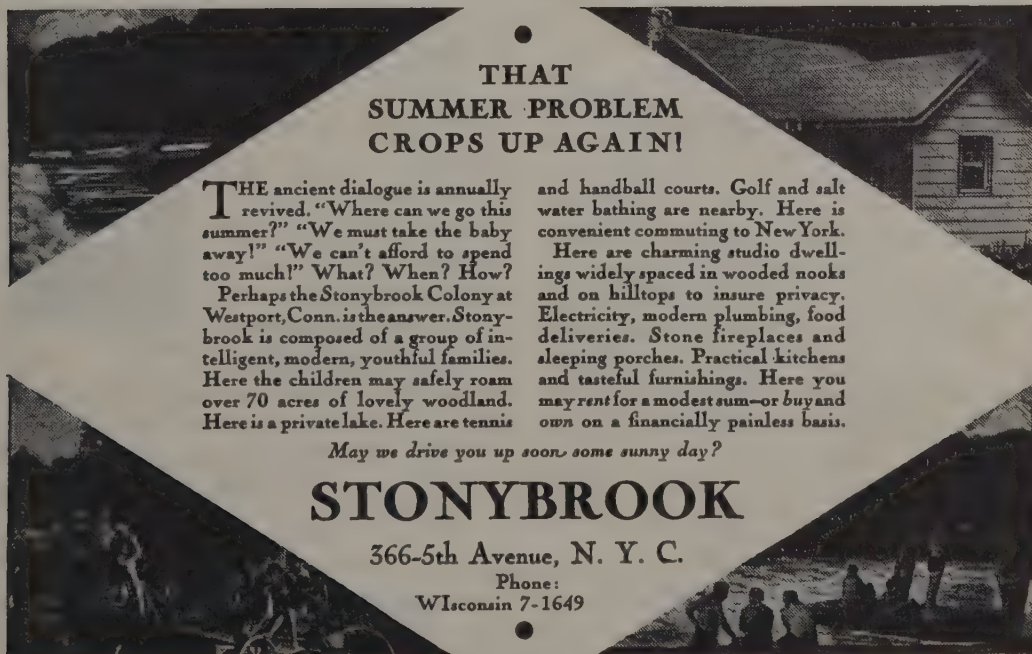
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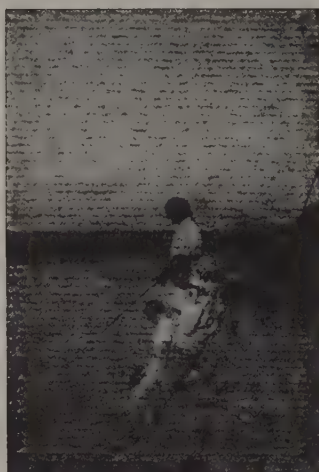
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# The Editors' Page



COMPETITION and rivalry — are they useful educational tools, or influences vicious in their impact on growing personalities? The effort to better one's own past record is a valuable form of rivalry to which no educator can object. But many have deplored the suffering and chagrin that too often follow competition with one's mates.

AND yet, this is a competitive world. Artists compete for fame. Political parties struggle for governmental control. Three hundred thousand boys and girls are contesting this year for admission to college. Many more are rivals for such jobs as industry provides. Once employed, these young people must demonstrate their superiority in order to advance to posts of responsibility and leadership. How can they be adequately prepared for maturity if rivalry is eliminated in childhood?

SOME progressive schools, seeking socialization, recognizing the hurts and damage of a strongly individualistic regime, have swung far away from a realistic order and sacrificed unnecessarily the values of a healthy rivalry. Group rivalry in particular provides incentive to helpfulness as well as accomplishment. Industry has learned that a flexible wage including a group bonus is often a stronger and more satisfying incentive than either an individual piece rate or a straight day wage.

THE zest of rivalry, the thrill of measuring one's strength or skill or ingenuity against that of one's fellows' teaches youth to know both his comrade and himself. He learns by his failures as well as by his successes—if these are guided constructively—to respect worthiness wherever he finds it, in himself or in others. In smoothing the way for sensitive young personalities, let us not wholly deny to them either the joys or the lessons of keen, clean competition.

*H. V. Bingham*

# CHILD STUDY

A JOURNAL OF PARENT  
EDUCATION

JUNE 1931

VOL. VIII

No. 10



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